

Mirror-Image Name

Description:

Children will use different media to communicate ideas as they learn about reflection and mirror image.

Materials:

white paper, styrofoam tray (or an old cookie tray or garage sale sign), pencils, paint (or washable markers), paintbrushes or a small roller, water and container, safety scissors, a mirror

Preparation:

Cut the edges off a styrofoam tray to create a flat surface to work on.



Procedure:

Give your child a Styrofoam tray (with the edges cut off) and ask her to print her name on the tray in pencil. (Assist her if necessary.) The idea is to make grooved marks in the tray. Then, have your child cover the surface of the tray with a light coating of paint using either a paintbrush or a small roller. (You can substitute a washable marker for the paint.) If a paintbrush is used, take care that the grooves of the printed name do not fill up with paint. Next, have your child lay a sheet of white paper on top of the tray and rub it lightly with the palm of her hand. When the paper is peeled away, you will see the name in reverse. Hold it up to a mirror to see the magic unfold.

Extension:

Look at the drawings of Leonardo da Vinci to see his reverse handwriting.

Take a trip to a lake or pond to see reflections of trees and clouds in the water.

You can do this in your own bathtub using bath toys.

Look at paintings or photographs that show reflections in water.

Just for Kids:

Many famous artists taught themselves to draw and paint without help from teachers. Some of them improved their skills by writing backwards or even drawing pictures upside down. Leonardo's drawings show the artist's handwriting in reverse. Some believe that it was easier for him as a left-handed artist to write backwards. Others think that Leonardo wrote his notes in reverse to keep his inventions secret. The easiest way to read what Leonardo wrote is to hold a mirror up to his work.

